

Intermediate and Advanced Policies



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Safe Routes
to School
National
Partnership

“Intermediate” Policies

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Policy Workbook

Policy Workbook! It is designed to help school and community members create and implement Safe Routes to School programs. The workbook will help you build your own customized Safe Routes to School policy for your community.

encourages students to walk, ride bicycles, or use public transit to school. Active transportation improves health, reduces traffic, and protects the environment. Making it easy for parents and many community stakeholders, including neighborhood businesses, planners, transportation departments, and school districts. The Safe Routes to School Policy Workbook helps schools make

Supporting Saf



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Limiting Restrictions on Active Transportation



Limiting Restrictions on Active Transportation

Explanation: While schools should, of course, prioritize the safety of their students, schools do not have the ultimate authority to determine how students will travel to and from school. In fact, school districts subject themselves to potential liability when they try to restrict how students travel to and from school. When decisions about which mode of transportation to use are taken away from students and their families, districts may themselves acquire increased responsibility for ensuring that children get to school safely, and thus may be more likely to be found liable if injuries occur during transit. In addition to increased risk of liability, districts may be overstepping the bounds of their authority over students when they try to control

Option 1: District acknowledges that the choice of which mode of transportation to use when traveling to and from school rests with students and/or their families, rather than with District or individual schools. Accordingly, District shall prohibit individual schools from restricting any mode of active transportation used to travel to and from school. Notwithstanding the foregoing, where unusual traffic or other dangers make active transportation exceptionally unsafe, individual schools can discourage, but not prohibit, students from engaging in active transportation to and from school.

not prohibit, students from engaging in active transportation to and from school.

Rating: ★★ ⓘ

Schools generally don't have the authority to restrict how kids get to school



Why Avoid Bike Bans?

Legally Speaking

- Bike bans can increase the risk of liability for school districts.
- Districts may be overstepping their authority when they try to control how students travel to school.
- Districts may be interfering with parents' constitutional rights to make decisions about how to raise their children and whether to send their

Backing Off Bike Bans The Legal Risks of Banning Bicycling to School

Most school districts around the nation recognize that whether children are allowed to bike to school is a family choice. But in a few districts, school officials take one look at morning traffic and decide that allowing students to bike to school is just too dangerous. For a small percentage of families – around seven percent – restrictive school policies such as bike bans act as a barrier to children walking and biking to school.¹

When students get regular physical activity, their health and academic

Crossing Guards



Components of policy provisions:

- Ensure process for hiring, training, and equipping
- Work to ensure that the distribution is equitable
- Seek more funding if necessary



Legal note in policy workbook:

- Discusses issues re **who runs the program** – district, police department, or other
- Notes potential for **liability** issues
- Provides **best practices/good steps**

Legal Note: It is simplest for school districts when local municipalities or counties administer crossing guard programs. However, school districts may have existing crossing guard programs or may be considering implementing such programs. It is important to understand the legal implications of beginning or operating a crossing guard program.

In general, schools do not owe a duty to students to protect against injuries that occur off campus during the course of normal school hours. Moreover, they are not obligated to implement crossing guard programs on campus, even on notoriously dangerous crosswalks that their students must navigate en route to and from school. A school district can be held liable for student injuries occurring off campus if it has "specifically assumed responsibility for student safety. That is, if a school district provides and administers a crossing guard program, it has undertaken to provide students with a measure of supervision and protection. The school district owes students a duty to operate and administer the program in a reasonable manner. If a school district voluntarily assumes responsibility for a crossing guard program, it may be held liable for injuries that result from its failure to operate the program with reasonable care. This does not mean that a school district is held liable for all accidents that occur – just for those where the school acted negligently in failing to properly operate crossing guard programs despite the possible exposure to liability for two reasons: (1) because of the care about increasing student safety; and (2) because often the best way to avoid liability is to prevent injuries from occurring in the first place.

With regards to student safety patrols, it is unlikely that schools would face liability in cases where they do not have in mind that, typically, student safety patrols monitor and control student-pedestrians; they do not control traffic. As with crossing guard programs, however, any time a school fails to operate a program with reasonable care, it exposes itself to potential liability. Thus, schools do well to establish and maintain running student safety patrol programs. Likewise, they will want to anticipate possible dangers and take reasonable steps to avoid them. It's also worth repeating that if the patrols decrease the number of injuries occurring to students, the overall effect might be to decrease the risk of liability for the district.

Resources:

Student Arrival & Dismissal



- Recognizes that this can be a dangerous time
- District requires schools to separate each mode from the others as much as possible
- Provides a variety of strategies



Bike Parking



- Basic policy: Require abundant bicycle parking
- Increase with demand
- Option: Locate in visible areas, locked if necessary
- Option: Protected from elements



Student Transportation Department



**There's more to life than
school buses.**







WALKING
SCHOOL
BUS!

Martin Luther King Jr.
Elementary School

FIRE
CHICAGO
CREW
CHICAGO

Option 1: The role of the District Transportation Department [and/or insert appropriate job title] shall include, among other things:

1. Encouraging active transportation to and from school;
2. Decreasing the number of personal motor vehicles on or near campus that drop-off and pick-up students;
3. Managing school bus pick-up and drop-off systems to minimize conflicts between buses, personal motor vehicles, and those engaged in active transportation;
4. Identifying and pursuing funding for [Safe Routes to School](#) programs and infrastructure improvements, particularly for hazards or areas where infrastructure could improve safety for active transportation to school; and
5. Actively participating in the Safe Routes to School District Task Force.

This Policy shall be incorporated into District's [Transportation Policies]

Rating: ★★ ⓘ

- **Option:** Also, makes these requirements a specific % of job duties



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School Travel Plan



Option 1: District requires that each school adopt a School Travel Plan that addresses all modes of active transportation and related safety, access, and parking issues. The plans shall also include goals, strategies, and objectives for increasing active transportation among students and staff, including those with disabilities. At a minimum, the School Travel Plan shall contain a map identifying the school,

streets surrounding the school, existing traffic controls, established pedestrian and bicycle routes,

plans that facilitate routes which separate active commuters from motor vehicles, with the goal of

improving safety and accessibility for all users.

- School travel plan: A strategic plan with maps, benchmarks, and objectives, for supporting active transportation
- Each school required to adopt a school travel plan



School Design



New schools and renovations: site design

Option 1:

- Commits the district generally to accommodating safety for all modes

Option 1: District acknowledges that school design can have a significant impact on the number of students that engage in active transportation to and from school. According to the following, when constructing a new school or renovating an existing school, District shall:

1. Accommodate the safety and convenience of students, staff, and visitors, including those with disabilities, in arriving and departing by different modes of transportation, including walking, bicycling, public transportation, school buses, and private automobiles; and
2. Minimize conflicts between those engaging in active transportation, school buses, and

New schools and renovations: site design

Option 2: Adds specifics, such as:

- Having multiple entrances from different streets for active transportation
- Avoid entrances and exits on busy streets

Option 2:

District shall require all schools to:

1. **Work to establish remote drop-off locations or "staging posts" approximately 0.5 miles from school entrances;**
2. **Provide multiple entrances and exits to the school for active transportation that are separated from automobiles;**
3. **Provide a practical and safe route for bicycles and pedestrians through the school campus;**
4. **Avoid having entrances and exits for walking and bicycling on fast or busy roadways and parking areas;**
5. **Avoid locating waiting zones for school buses, truck unloading/loading zones, and**

School Siting/ Attendance Zones





- School locations are important & long term
- Decisions are often ad hoc
- Good policies can provide a process and balance interests

Workbook has basic version

Option 1: District acknowledges the importance of schools' locations for students and for the entire community, including the importance of locating schools in or near residential neighborhoods and in central locations in order to (i) achieve important benefits for students' health, (ii) allow students to engage in active transportation to and from school, and (iii) provide students and community members the opportunity to use school grounds for play and physical activity when school is not in session.^[70]

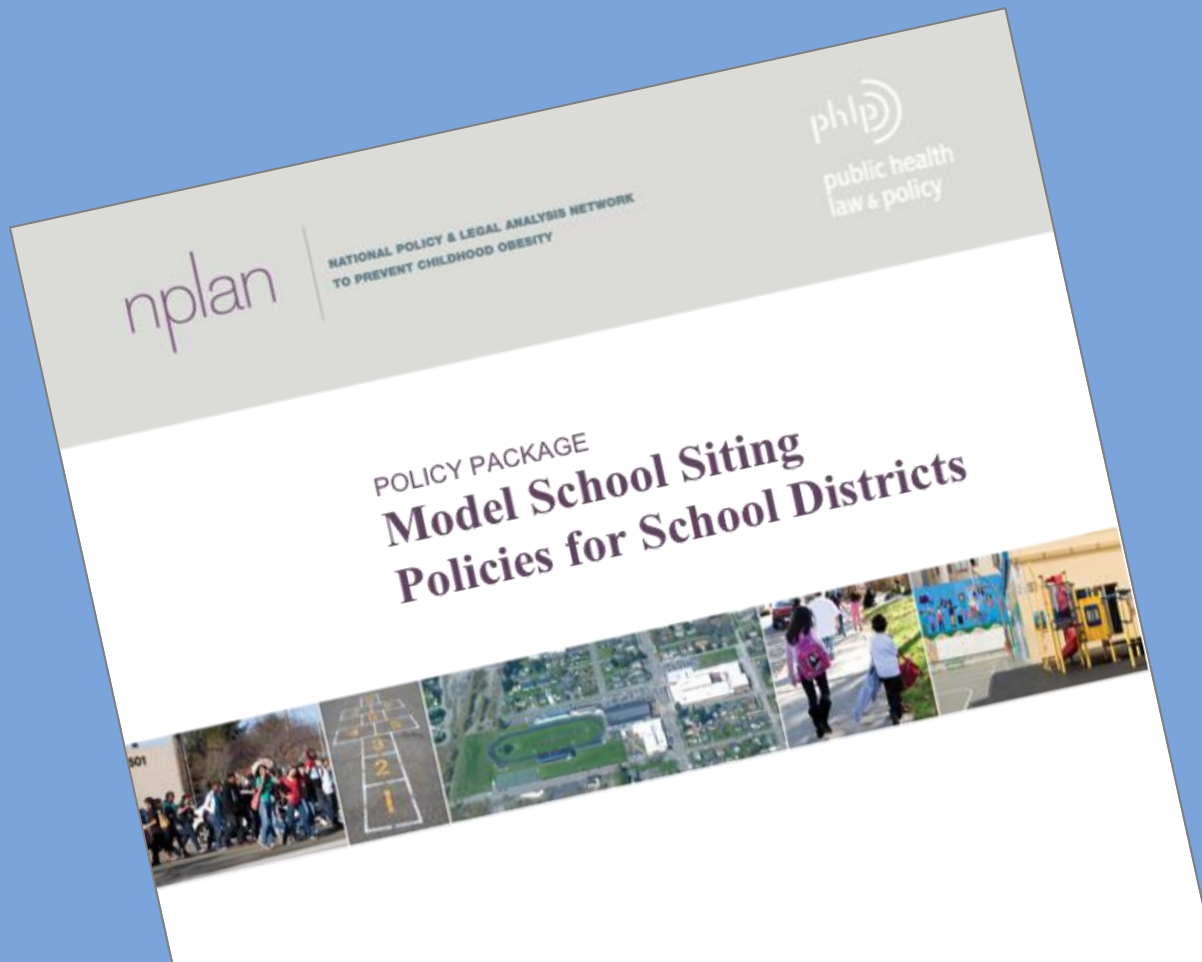
In making school siting determinations (including selecting new sites, renovating or rebuilding on existing sites, and closing existing schools), District shall give high priority to locations that:

1. **are walkable and bikeable [and provide access to public transportation] for a substantial proportion of the assigned student body;**
2. **have routes that support safe and active transportation to and from school;**
3. **support racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity;**
4. **are near other community resources.**

District shall also prioritize maintaining and retrofitting older school buildings over new construction.

Rating: ★★ ★★ ★★ ⓘ

Or use the stand
alone policies



Why use the policy workbook?

- Presents a wide array of policy options
- Assists districts in committing to strong policies
- Helps avoid problems and liability concerns by ensuring a well thought through, vetted approach





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